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EDITORIAL COMMENT



LESSONS FROM THE CONVENTIONS

WE take it for granted that those of our readers who were not able to attend the meetings of the two great nursing societies held in Boston in June have, during the past month, studied carefully the report of the American Nurses' Association as it appeared in our August issue. There are always certain ideas put forward at such gatherings that have a marked influence on the immediate development of nursing affairs, and for that reason the reports are important, not only for their interest at the time, but for the results which we may look for in the immediate future. This JOURNAL does not give the full proceedings of the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools, as that society publishes its proceedings in book form, a copy of which may be had by application to the secretary, Miss Jessie Catton, Springfield Hospital, Springfield, Mass., at a charge of about a dollar.

With reference to the revision of the by-laws, we want to say again that the printed form as it appeared in that number is not in working shape, but appears there as the report submitted by the committee to the association after the first day's discussion. The by-laws as finally adopted, with the amendments and changes authorized by the association, are now in pamphlet form, ready for distribution, and may be obtained by sending to the secretary, whose change of address is officially announced in this number. Miss Deans is taking a vacation of indefinite length at her home in Oswego, N. Y. (174 West Fifth Street). We want to call attention to this change of address because nurses are so accustomed to associating Miss Deans with the work in Detroit, where she had her training and where she has done her professional work.

THE EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND THE CENTRAL NURSING COLLEGE

Both in the Superintendents' Society and the American Nurses' Association the subject of a shorter working day for nurses in training was given considerable emphasis. It seems to be the consensus of opinion that the ten-, eleven-, or twelve-hour day, which is still the custom in too many hospitals, is an absolutely unreasonable requirement. How to shorten this time, care for the hospital patient, and give the pupils a reasonable proportion of time for those studies which the least progressive admit are essential, is a subject which was discussed, and which has been discussed at many meetings before. A few superintendents have succeeded in working out an eight-hour day without adding materially to the number of nurses, but their method does not seem to appeal to the majority or to be applicable to all hospitals.

We seem to have dropped for some time effort and discussion for the establishment of separate nursing schools or colleges where the nurse can be prepared for her professional experience, training alike for the large hospital and the small, in the same way that students are prepared for the other professions, and we believe that the establishment of such schools will be our next great accomplishment.

A few years ago the cry was for opportunities for post-graduate work. This subject was given prominence at all of our conventions and in the pages of this JOURNAL until, without any one realizing what was taking place, we find all over the country increasing opportunities for such experience, until to-day the graduate who feels herself in need of further training or brushing up after a long period of work in some one line is given a choice of schools where she may go for such additional training as she feels she needs.

This question of the central nursing college, as we are going to call it hereafter, needs to be agitated first among local groups of superintendents, wherever they may be, at local and state meetings, and at our national gatherings, and before we realize what is happening we shall have other universities besides Columbia, Minnesota, and South Dakota with departments of nursing regularly established as part of their curriculum.

The idea of the central nursing college should receive the support of all intelligent hospital boards, as it would relieve them of the trouble and expense of providing the equipment and teaching force for the theoretical part of the nurses' education.

WHERE THE ALUMNÆ ASSOCIATIONS MAY HELP

In the discussion of the subject of preparation for social service Miss Maxwell, who is one of the active teaching force of longest experience, in speaking of the unwillingness of nurses to enter the field of tuberculosis and social service, made the suggestion that *alumnæ* associations should request of their schools that these two subjects be included in the course of instruction given the pupils, and should urge that the pupils be given some training along these lines before graduation. Her little account of the development of such work at the Presbyterian Hospital, New York, is full of suggestion, and personally we are in sympathy with all that she said.

Miss McIsaac, in the report of her work as interstate secretary, called attention to the fact that it is as much the duty of the *alumnæ* as of the superintendent of a school to safeguard its reputation, and cited the instance of an association which protested successfully to a hospital board against the admission to its school of a group of nurses which had been discharged from another school for cause, and where the board had over-ruled the protest of the superintendent.

PROFESSOR WINSLOW'S ADDRESS

Professor Winslow's paper on *The Rôle of the Nurse in the Campaign for Public Health* has been reprinted for circulation. One of the most encouraging experiences of the Boston meetings was the realization that outside of the nursing ranks men and women are beginning to grasp clearly the practical value and importance of our great problems. For many years we seemed to be working alone, round and round in a circle, but, as Professor Winslow's paper shows, we have attracted the attention of at least one educator to a greater extent than we had appreciated, and we may hope to receive great support and assistance from the educators as the years go on.

The fact that the social workers whose province lies in the outside world and in closer touch with other kinds of workers have caught the attention of educators would seem to demonstrate the fact that the teaching body, in attempting to establish its ideals, has been perhaps too modest, and that every opportunity should be seized to put the affairs of the training school, its needs, its ideals, and its relation to the public more strongly before different groups of workers. Each superintendent should strive to present in her own community the subject of nursing education and its ideals before local clubs and groups of educators.

DR. CABOT'S ACCUSATION

One of the very interesting addresses, which was listened to with close attention, and has been read, we believe, very carefully, was that by Dr. Cabot on Hospital Social Service. The distinction which he made between the strictly professional duties of the doctor and nurse and those of the social worker was intensely interesting and to the point, and we are sure has cleared the situation for hundreds of our readers, but we take great exception to his assertion that the doctor and the nurse should stick to the business of diagnosis and treatment and leave the question of cause to another set of workers. This great field of social work has been practically developed by nurses and is simply one of the features of visiting nursing which has been practised since its earliest day. Its application to hospitals and hospital work has been a later development and, while it marks an era, it does not in any sense exclude the nurse from the field. Her nursing knowledge, with the district training, makes her in our opinion an infinitely more valuable social worker, provided she has the right temperament for this kind of investigation. Names come to us, as we write, of women who have so long developed such work in connection with visiting nursing—Miss Wald, Miss Dock, Miss Fulmer, Miss Cabaniss, the late Miss Upjohn, and Miss Lent; and of younger women, such as Miss Johnson, Miss Foley, the late Lucy Fisher, and hosts of others.

Another point made by Dr. Cabot to which we take exception is the opinion which he expressed so strongly that nurses and doctors necessarily become hardened to suffering because of their familiarity with hospital conditions. This may apply to very young medical men and nurses who think it smart to show no feeling, or may be, in some instances, a matter of temperament or of misplaced choice of occupation, but the tenderest men and women we have known have been those who have spent their lives in hospital service, which, when entered upon in the proper spirit, has, we believe, exactly the opposite effect from what Dr. Cabot has stated. The nurse and doctor both acquire habits of self-control and self-forgetfulness in their efforts to alleviate the suffering of those placed under their care, and this self-control is too frequently misconstrued as callousness. There is no time for formal expressions of sympathy on the part of either the doctor or nurse in the rush of the daily demands. A conservation of nervous energy is required in alleviating the condition of the patients, and is perhaps more apparent in hospital routine than in the ordinary home care. While we admit that there are heartless doctors and nurses, we contend

that the fault is within themselves and not a direct result of the hospital environment. We had not expected the shattering of the highest ideals of the two professions by a man of Dr. Cabot's quick sympathies and close association with doctors and nurses.

What nurses need to cultivate more than anything else, especially hospital workers, is an attitude of repose. We are drifting into a state of rush, and with the feeling that there is so much work to be done it is hard to stop for a quiet word with either a patient or visitor. This is largely a habit or an affectation, for in scores of hospitals most effectively administered it is entirely absent. This attitude gives a wrong impression to outsiders, disturbs the patients, and retards more than it aids the work. It starts the pupil in training with the wrong attitude toward the patients she is caring for.

THE STATE ASSOCIATION AND THE LAW

AT this season organization affairs come again into activity, programmes are being arranged, boards of examiners are getting down to their winter's work, and there would seem to be every indication of a year of marked progress in all lines of educational work.

We may rightly claim to have passed the pioneer period of state registration. While there are a few states straggling in the rear, twenty-nine have now before them the effective administration of laws which, with one or two exceptions, cover those sections of the country where nursing affairs are of importance. We have said many times before that the work of state registration had only commenced with the successful passage of the bill—that the real problem begins with the putting of the law into effect. The inequalities of these twenty-nine laws, some better, some worse, none perfect, but all, we believe, the best that could be secured at the time, complicate their carrying out. The point we want to emphasize at the beginning of this official year is the importance of close and cordial co-operation between the state associations that have secured the passage of the law, whether effective or otherwise, and the boards of examiners, upon whose shoulders rests the responsibility of its administration. In those states where the state association has failed to secure the right of nomination to the governor, where the governor has independent appointing power and may go outside the nursing associations for a candidate, there would seem to be great danger of the state association losing its proper place in the carrying out of the measure for which it was originally responsible. We are quite sure that arrangements should be made for a board of examiners to make a report at least once a year to the state association of its

proceedings. This has been done, we know, from the very first, in some of the states, and if we are to hold the interest of the great nursing body from year to year, members must be kept informed of such important matters as the number being enrolled from season to season, the conditions that are required of the schools, the difficulties that are having to be met and overcome, and the defects that are specially obstructive in the administration of the law, with a view always to its amendment when all progress has been made that is possible under its original form.

In no one particular has the state association a greater right to protest than when inexperienced and unsuitable women are selected to serve on the board of examiners. It has been demonstrated that the exclusion from these boards of nurses who are in hospital or teaching positions is exceedingly detrimental to the best service. While a board need not be made up entirely from members of the teaching body, it should be composed of at least a majority of women who are either in active teaching work or have within a reasonable term of years been so occupied.

We think the teaching body in every state should also feel a great responsibility in co-operating with the examining boards in promoting such educational conditions as are being outlined. A few women holding important positions, who are pulling back rather than pulling with the board, may do much to retard the best work, and the absolutely indifferent woman, who does not interest herself one way or the other in the administration of the law, is, if anything, a greater drag than its opponents. Team work is what we must have to get the best out of the year.

THE JOURNAL

TWELVE years ago, on the 1st day of October, the first number of the *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING* saw the light—the result of plans and effort covering a period of a half-dozen years and of as many months of direct effort on the part of a small group of people. The question of the ownership is too well known to our readers to require more than the merest reference, and that only for our very new subscribers. This project, the greatest, we believe, that the national association has ever undertaken, was financed by a small group of its members with the understanding that when the association should be sufficiently developed, both in members and in funds, it would repay to those women the money actually advanced in the beginning, and that the association should then take over the financial responsibility

and management of the magazine. Little by little this pledge has been redeemed until now the American Nurses' Association actually owns eighty-four of the original one hundred shares.

The American Journal of Nursing Company, which is the name under which the women who financed the enterprise were obliged to be incorporated in order to meet the requirements of the postal laws, is now calling in the remaining shares, and it is expected that before this time in 1912 a complete transfer of the stock of this company will have been made to the American Nurses' Association. Miss Delano, the retiring president of the Associated Alumnae, made the suggestion during the last session of the convention that in celebration of the completion of this transfer, representing so much labor and loyalty, the association should strive to double its subscription list. This ought to be a perfectly simple thing to do if each one of our readers will appreciate her own individual responsibility to secure one new subscriber and see to it that the amount of her subscription, two dollars, in addition to her own renewal, is sent to the JOURNAL office.

The JOURNAL during this first decade has been a powerful factor in our educational and organization life. Without it we could not have gone forward with anything like the uniformity that we have attained, we could not have developed state registration or the course at Teachers' College or the Robb Memorial Fund, or have been in any sense ready for the beginning of the Nurses' Relief Fund, which is the youngest child of the national association. The coming years should, with wise, conservative management, make the JOURNAL more than a means of educational progress—a source of revenue by which those various funds may be added to from year to year. In this first decade there has been much voluntary service for which the JOURNAL is now beginning to pay moderately, and with its workers properly compensated, and with a fund always in reserve for emergencies, such surplus as there may be at the end of each year can quite properly be used as above suggested.

The JOURNAL and its maintenance, like the Robb Educational Fund and the Relief Fund, are perpetual obligations in the society and are as much for the benefit of the nurses of the future as for those of to-day, and nurses everywhere, including pupils in training, must be educated to their responsibility in maintaining them. We constantly hear that the greatest motive for good works is for each individual to make his little niche in the world more livable when he leaves it than when he found it, and so each group of workers, as they come into the field, must make these three projects of the national society greater forces for those who are to follow them.

Very effective work has been done during the past year in the affiliated state and alumnæ associations by the appointment of a special JOURNAL committee whose business it is to seek out those members who are non-subscribers and make them realize the importance of the JOURNAL to them educationally, and their responsibility to it as a member of the national association.

The JOURNAL should be provided for pupils in training in order that every nurse who goes out may be familiar with it, and the two points above mentioned should be impressed upon every member of the school. From a business standpoint the JOURNAL must always labor under the disadvantage of having nurses, living in groups or clubs, make one number serve for one or one hundred readers, but we find, even in our own limited circle, and among our former pupils, many nurses who do not pretend to read the JOURNAL and who apparently have no appreciation of their need of it.

Sample copies of the magazine can always be had for the asking to give to nurses who are not familiar with it. With the same enthusiasm that has made the transfer of stock possible, let us have the subscription list doubled before the last share is transferred from the company to the association.

At this season of the year when definite plans for the coming year are being made, the JOURNAL also is making its plans and is more than glad of suggestions from its readers in the way of helpful criticism or advice. We have never heard a word of comment regarding the list of articles suitable for reading which has been published of late in the department of Notes from the Medical Press. We should be glad to hear whether it has proved of practical value to any nurses in the way of a guide.

We want to remind the private duty nurse that while members in other branches of work are contributing freely to our pages, it is with the greatest difficulty that we can secure good papers on private nursing subjects, although all such papers written specially for our pages, and not read at meetings, will be paid for.

SEX HYGIENE

To our readers who are specially anxious to keep in touch with the progress that has been made along such lines of work as deal directly with the prevention of social diseases, we wish to recommend a little magazine published quarterly by the Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis, with headquarters at 29 West 42d Street, New York City, the price being one dollar a year. The July number contains a very

interesting report of a joint meeting held by this society and the Medical Society of the County of New York, and includes reports of addresses given by such leaders in the movement as J. Riddle Goffe, M.D.; Prince A. Morrow, M.D.; William M. Polk, M.D.; and E. J. Lederle, Ph.D.

The editor, in commenting on the literature which is being published on the subject of the awakening interest in sex problems, says, "A deluge of so-called sex books is flooding the country, a few of them good, most of them indifferent, and some of them positively bad. This multiplication of harmful literature constitutes a real danger we have to face," and he further comments on the "utter unpreparedness on the part of teachers, the majority of whom are young and unmarried women, to impart this instruction." He goes on to state that the preparation of suitable text-books for teachers and the devising of special methods of instruction will be one of the functions of the American Federation for Sex Hygiene.

At the meeting above referred to, the discussion was upon the possibility of making venereal diseases reportable, and the subject brought out many sides of the problem of immense value to those who are following this subject.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CLEAN JOURNALISM?

At the fifth annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Superintendents of Training Schools, in an address entitled "The Making of an Ideal Nursing Journal," Mary A. Catton of the Lady Stanley Institute, Ottawa, discussed the subject with much intelligence, but we have to disagree with her on one point. She says: "To be clean, a journal must keep out of its pages articles dealing with the moral and professional shortcomings of nurses and physicians, articles dealing with prophylactic measures necessary in certain specific diseases, articles dealing with the pros and cons of certain duties in the nursing care of male patients."

The whole world has, in the last few years, wakened to a recognition of the fact that it is what has been called "the conspiracy of silence" more than any other factor which has brought about the shocking prevalence of social diseases, the white slave traffic, and all the ills that follow in their wake. We think to exclude the discussion of such subjects from nursing magazines would be to take a cowardly attitude, as no group of people needs enlightening more than nurses, both for their own protection, and because no other group of workers is better qualified to act as teachers after they are properly informed.

In the quarterly above referred to, Dr. J. R. Goffe has expressed

better than we can do the attitude of a true woman toward this campaign, when he says: "Women—modest, refined, and most womanly of women—are not offended by our plainness of speech; their feeling is not one of outraged modesty, but rather of indignation and resentment that matters which so materially concern their health and the health and lives of their children have always been concealed from them by the medical profession."

THE PAGE BILL

THE highest Court of New York State has pronounced Clause 79 of the Page Bill unconstitutional, thus reversing the decision of the Appellate Division and upholding that of the first court. The fate of the clause is thus permanently settled, and medical examination of prostitutes, in other words, state inspection and regulation of vice, cannot be carried on as a legal procedure in New York State. Miss Dock says of it: "There is little doubt that this victory is directly due to the ability of the woman lawyer retained on the case, Miss Bertha Rembaugh, of the New York bar. It will be remembered that she won the case in the lowest court last fall, medical examinations in the night court being at once discontinued. The district attorney's office contested the verdict, and gained its reversal in the second court. Medical examinations were then immediately resumed. Miss Rembaugh then carried her case to Albany and made a masterly argument. The verdict was given in a very short time.

"It has been very interesting to notice that all the women who have actively opposed the degradation of their sex by the introduction into New York State of continental standards of immorality have been active suffragists. Those who have accepted the men's point of view in defending the cause have been, with rare exceptions, pronounced anti-suffragists.

"In this victory the nursing profession has had a share. The New York State Nurses' Association ratified and endorsed the protests, resolutions, and appeals sent out by the Allied Societies of Women, contributed ten dollars toward expenses, and a representative of the society, one of its officers, went to Albany with the delegation to the hearing on a proposal to amend the Page law by repealing Clause 79. Another woman who has been one of the most active and useful combatants, though for some years a physician, was also originally a nurse, —Dr. Jane D. Berry. A deep debt of gratitude is owed to Mrs. Donald Hooker, of Baltimore; she is also a medical woman, and married to a physician. She and Dr. Hooker gave the whole sum of money necessary

for the legal fight in the case. Mrs. Hooker is the President of the Just Government League of Maryland, an active suffrage organization, and Dr. Hooker is the President of the Maryland Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis.

"The whole course of the Page law clause has been one of the most striking illustrations of the need of women for the franchise and one of the strongest arguments for its bestowal that current events have yet offered."

THE NURSES' RELIEF FUND

THE first report of the Nurses' Relief Fund, made by the chairman in the official department, shows that of the \$1800 pledged, \$286.90 has been sent in. We hope the organizations will act on Miss Giberson's suggestion and take this matter up during the early fall meetings, and give it prominence during the winter. No nurse can tell when she may be in need of just such help as this fund may bring her, and aside from the contributions from organizations, which make the greatest showing, this is a cause to which the most humble member should feel herself privileged to contribute.

THE INTERSTATE SECRETARY'S ITINERARY

IN our July issue, Miss McIsaac, the interstate secretary, published her itinerary for the coming season. We want to remind the associations that she is to start October first, and during that month and November will visit New England, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. State and local associations that have neglected to get into communication with Miss McIsaac must do so immediately if they wish to have her attend their meetings this year. She feels that some of her best work has been done in meeting small groups of superintendents, pupils in training, and at graduating exercises. In some cities the pupils of a number of schools were brought together at one central point, at others she visited hospitals, talking to smaller numbers. She is anxious to be called upon either by associations or individuals as she goes along, but she does not offer to visit a community without an invitation. Her services are free, her salary being provided by the organizations sending her out, the expense to societies or individuals sending for her being a division of the cost of her travelling expenses along her route. She may be addressed at Benton Harbor, Michigan.